

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS



**TOM JOHNSON, FACHE
SECRETARY**

**ARNOLD
SCHWARZENEGGER,
GOVERNOR**

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Arnold Schwarzenegger, The Veterans' Governor

**By Tom Johnson,
Secretary**

As September begins we are reminded of that fateful day five years ago when our world was forever changed and our nation embarked on a war to fight terrorism that still continues today. September 11th changed all of us and it is only fitting that our country recognizes the many who died that day as Patriots. Please remember these men and women in your prayers that day.

Patriots come in many shapes and sizes and one very strong supporter of our patriots, military personnel, and veterans is California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. As the country is reminded every day of our ongoing battle against terrorism by newspaper articles or

news broadcasts, Governor Schwarzenegger demonstrates his support for veterans and those currently serving our nation time and time again.

In June, Governor Schwarzenegger issued a statement commemorating the anniversary of D-Day, which marked the U.S. Allies invasion of Normandy in 1944. He used this occasion to remind Californians to pay tribute, not just to our nation's greatest generation, but also to remember the men and women currently serving in Iraq, Afghanistan, and throughout the globe.

Although the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' laptop, which was stolen not long ago, has been recovered and evidence suggests the data

was not compromised, during the first few days of news of the theft, Governor Schwarzenegger took the initiative and ordered the California Department of Veterans Affairs, State and Consumer Services Agency, and the California Department of Consumer Affairs to design and carry out a series of informational workshops to empower veterans and military personnel on ways to protect themselves from identity theft.

Last month, Governor Schwarzenegger issued a statement supporting the transfer of the Mount Soledad Veterans Memorial in San Diego, to the federal government. In doing so, Governor

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The Veterans' Governor cont.

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- Tom Johnson

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Schwarzenegger stood with local veterans and residents opposed to the possibility of the historic monument being destroyed or moved.

Also during August, Governor Schwarzenegger attended the 74th National Convention of the Military Order of the Purple Heart, held in Los Angeles, where he presented Purple Heart medals to Californians awarded by order of the President.

It was difficult to find a dry eye in the house as the Governor pinned Purple Hearts on Staff Sergeant Richard Sanchez, Sergeant Nicholas Weber, Specialist Caston Marujo, Sergeant Mario Cortez, and Specialist Anastacio Lopez.

To further honor these medal recipients and those awarded the Purple Heart before them for having earned this special recognition, Governor Schwarzenegger

signed a proclamation naming August as Purple Heart Month in California.

With so many of our men and women being called to active duty to fight the war on terrorism, our businesses, employers, and families are being severely impacted. To help coordinate and develop policies impacting California's relationship to the U.S. Military, Governor Schwarzenegger recently created the position of Advisor for Military Affairs. While our nation is involved in conflicts around the globe, many of our military personnel and their families fall prey to deceptive financing and investment schemes. To help alleviate this situation, he has tasked the Advisor for Military Affairs to work with the California Department of Corporations to create the State Military Financial Task Force, whose mission will be to protect military personnel and their families from being victimized by

scam artists. I am honored to have been named to this task force.

And just a couple days ago Governor Schwarzenegger signed 4 bills, which pay tribute to veterans. Among these bills are AB 2002, which allows counties to place the words "where we honor veterans" on county highway signs at or near the county line, AB 2740, which adds veterans' organizations to a list of groups that may use public school facilities for ceremonies, educational assemblies or celebrations, AB 1910, which expands the issuance of disabled person and disabled veterans license plates to organizations that transport the disabled, and AB 2777, which expands the list of veterans organizations protected from false representation.

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In closing I would like to point out that Governor Schwarzenegger truly is the veterans governor, for he has advanced the funding for five new veterans homes to be built over the next seven years, has increased opportunities for disabled veteran business owners, formed the Veterans Education Opportunities Partnership to make California's higher education system more accessible to military personnel, and made it a crime in California to impersonate a veteran. He also demonstrated his support for veterans by providing \$443.5 million for the operation of the Department of Veterans Affairs in his 2006-07 state

budget, including \$3.8 million for the new Yountville Alzheimer's/Dementia unit and \$550,000 for outreach efforts and materials to help veterans take advantage of federal benefits and pensions.



East Bay Stand Down, Veterans Never Forgotten

By Jody Price
Information Officer
Yountville Veterans Home

It has been a long and tiring 4 days and as I prepare for the final day of the East Bay Stand Down, it saddens me to think of where some of these men and women will be

sleeping tonight. You never realize what you have until you lose it. Thankfully I did not have to experience a loss in that way. I have experienced it through the eyes of 399 people who attended the East Bay Stand Down and believe me; I have been counting all of my blessings. As the 'Camera Lady,' which seemed to be everybody's nickname for me, I had the opportunity to get to know some of the participants quite well. I learned

that the price some of these people paid for our freedom is still haunting them. The families that were broken up, jobs and homes lost, and legal issues have made it nearly impossible for many of these veterans to continue on in society. With the help of the County Veterans Services Officers and others, these veterans have been identified and given one of the most generous opportunities to get back on their feet.

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Veterans Never Forgotten cont.



Dick and Jane Hum, Master Popcorn Makers.



Yountville Veterans Home member Dick Hum getting ready for the night's movie.

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Thursday morning at 0900 hours I witnessed the first veteran to arrive on one of the many busses that transported veterans to what could be a new beginning. Some of them were thrilled to be there while others kept their heads low as if this were just another dead end in their lives.

As the days went by I enjoyed seeing and hearing the accomplishments the participants had made at this Stand Down. One veteran shared with me that he had 18 citations. All were dismissed

and now, with only a \$25.00 fee, he would be able to renew his California Drivers License. This is just one of the many legal issues that these veterans presented, and with the help of some wonderful volunteer judges, a lot of issues were dismissed and these folks could be on their way to a fresh start.

There were many different methods of healing going on all over the Stand Down campus. The medical and dental providers were extremely busy throughout the week.

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Love Reigns Supreme in Chula Vista

By John Smith
Information Officer
Chula Vista Veterans Home

Friday, August 4, 2006 was a very special day on the Chula Vista Veterans Home campus. It was the culmination of several weeks of very meticulous planning. The "F" building

recreation hall was beautifully decorated. Residents and staff were gathered to attend a very important ceremony. Many people flew in from all over the United States and one came in from England. All were there to attend

the wedding of Veterans Home residents Helene Rosen and Morris "Monty" Montgomery.

Helene and Monty met seven months ago on the Veterans Home campus. Helene, a U.S. Marine Corps veteran of

World War II had been a resident of the Veterans Home since February of 2005.

Monty, a retired Navy Commander with 35 years of service during World War II, Korea, and Vietnam was on a tour of the veterans' home.

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Veterans Never Forgotten cont.

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Religious services were held all hours of the day. Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous services were also provided 24/7. Community Services were available for the participants to research their different options. Dick and Jane Hum manned the veterans' home booth and did a terrific job giving out information that included several veterans' home applications. These services were the backbone of the event.

When the participants were not receiving one of these services, they could be found enjoying some of the entertainment that was provided. There were several outstanding bands and entertainers. Bingo and activities took place daily. Facials and massages were also given. And

art was drawn and later used to decorate the front of tents. But the most popular of all was the Yountville/AMVETS Movie Theater. We showed two movies each night and had a full house every time. We served more than 40 lbs of popcorn! It took Dick and Jane Hum, Wes McGirr, John "Mak" Makovec and Linda Hanson hours to prepare popcorn ahead of time just to have enough for everyone when the movies started. We may not be in the market for popcorn anytime soon, but it was surely a pleasure to be able to see these folks enjoy themselves. They all were very appreciative of all of our hard work.

One of the other highlights of the four-day event was the daily Stand Down newsletter that was produced by Nancy Bueno. There were 600 newsletters

printed each day, but that was not enough to go around. You would think we were handing out gold by the way all of the participants and volunteers reacted to the newsletter. Everybody could hardly wait to see if his or her picture was in it. We even had to bump up the production of the newsletter to 900 copies for Sunday. It was great to see everyone so excited and showing off his or her picture.

I am proud to say that I, along with Bart Buechner and several home members from the Veterans Home of California, Yountville have truly made a difference in the lives of some of the veterans who attended this year's East Bay Stand Down.

In the Bay Area, veterans are not forgotten!



*"As the days went by
I enjoyed seeing and
hearing the
accomplishments
the participants had
made at this year's
Stand Down."*

- Jody Price

Shooting from the HIPAA

By Venus Andrade
HIPAA Program Manager

*"We will continue
to maintain a
best in class
HIPAA Program."*

- Venus Andrade

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), also known as the Kassebaum-Kennedy bill, became law on August 21, 1996. HIPAA was introduced as a bill to improve the portability and continuity of health insurance coverage; to combat waste, fraud and abuse in health insurance and health care delivery; to improve access to services and coverage; and to simplify the administration of health insurance. Beginning in August of 1998, the Federal Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued regulations that require health care providers to adhere to national standards that

control and protect the flow of protected health information and establish penalties for the misuse or improper disclosure of this information.

The California Department of Veterans Affairs (CDVA) administers and operates programs that provide California veterans and their families with aid and assistance. The CDVA is classified as a health care provider under HIPAA and provides the State's aged or disabled veterans with rehabilitative and residential services and medical care in a home-like environment at the three California Veterans Homes, at Barstow, Chula Vista and Yountville.

The HIPAA Program at the

CDVA has made great strides since HIPAA became law. The CDVA has instituted compliance teams at Headquarters and each of the Veterans Homes to ensure that the appropriate oversight is in place to validate that safeguards are in place to protect individually identifiable information maintained by CDVA or its business associates.

Our efforts over the past few years have focused on meeting the important statutory due dates for HIPAA compliance.

"For example, we delivered and completed our privacy assessment, which benchmarked where the agency was in achieving

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Shooting from the HIPAA cont.

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privacy compliance. Our results showed a high level of compliance," said Deputy Secretary for Veterans Homes Bill Parente.

In addition, we updated and distributed our Notice of Privacy Practices so that our staff and the veterans we serve would know their rights under our HIPAA Program, understand the process for submitting requests for information and filing complaints and to have confidence that their personally protected information is controlled and protected.

Other achievements, especially over the past fiscal year, included a preemption analysis where the Legal Department reviewed the HIPAA laws and regulation to identify conflicts, if any, with State laws. We reviewed and

enhanced some of our policies, procedures and work practices. We also delivered more communications to the organization than in prior years -- helping the organization to better understand our methodologies and approach to achieving HIPAA compliance. We are strengthening our training program so that there is complete awareness and understanding throughout the agency on the critical aspects of controlling and protecting personally protected information and the appropriate steps to take if there is a security breach.

Paramount to the success of our program is working closely with the California Office of HIPAA Implementation (CalOHI). CalOHI has conducted a HIPAA compliance review on the

agency and we are working with them to ensure that we have a best in class HIPAA Program.

We will continue to maintain a best in class HIPAA Program. We are updating our website to include information on our HIPAA Program. We are also updating our information technology security to ensure that electronic information continues to receive the highest level of security and protection.

As our HIPAA Program continues to evolve, I will provide regular feature articles to communicate our progress and achievement. Until then, let's stay joined at the HIPAA!

"We delivered and completed our privacy assessment, which benchmarked where the agency was in achieving privacy compliance. Our results showed a high level of compliance."

- Bill Parente

Love Reigns Supreme in Chula Vista cont

Continued from page Four

Ironically, Helene's roommate was giving Monty the tour and introduced him to Helene. According to Monty, "It was love at first sight." Monty applied for Veterans Home residency the next day and asked Helene out to attend Sunday church services.

That first date led to many more. Within three months, Helene and Monty were engaged to be married. After a traditional Protestant

ceremony, conducted by Veterans Home Chaplain Robert Sattersfield, the happy couple drove to Vancouver, Canada for a two-week honeymoon.

Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. Montgomery. May your futures be filled with excitement, great adventures, and good health.

Congratulations are also in order for the staff of the Chula Vista Veterans Home.

Because of their

dedication and hard work, we are proud to announce that we have just concluded an exhaustive but successful survey of our Skilled Nursing facility by the California Department of Health Services. Our highest priority is providing the highest level of quality care and service to the veterans of the California Veterans Home in Chula Vista.

California Department of Veterans Affairs

1227 O Street,
Room 300
Sacramento, CA 95814

Phone
(916) 653-2158

Fax
(916) 653-2611

E-mail
NewsforVeterans@cdva.ca.gov

JP Tremblay
Deputy Secretary for
Communications

Jerry Jones
Chief, Legislation
and Public Affairs

Jaime A. Arteaga
Editor

California Department of Veterans Affairs

1227 O Street,
Room 300
Sacramento, CA 95814



We're on the Web!
www.cdva.ca.gov

CUSTOMER NAME
STREET ADDRESS
ADDRESS 2
CITY, ST ZIP CODE